

*Amendments to the Specification*

Please replace the paragraph on page 10, line 21 through page 11, line 7 with the following amended paragraph:

A Spatial Reuse Protocol Forwarding (SRPF) block 430 arbitrates between the transit traffic stored in SRAM 420 (i.e., traffic stored in high priority transit queue 421 and the plurality of low priority transit queues 423) and the host data received at input 474, multiplexing the transmit traffic and host data optionally using SRP fairness logic 425. Each node on the ring includes two full duplex ports. One is connected to the inner ring 126 and one is connected to the outer ring 146. The Spatial Reuse Protocol Forwarding (SRPF) block 430 arbitrates between the transit traffic and the host data received (transmit traffic), using SRP fairness logic 425, such as the fairness logic described in “The Cisco SRP MAC Layer Protocol”, by Tsiang and Suwala, RFC 2892 (Aug. 2000). The SRP fairness logic is a transmission control logic, which attempts to ensure that nodes get equal usage. The SRP fairness logic determines if a node is sourcing or forwarding an excessive amount of traffic and either imposes rate controls and/or originates and propagates fairness information, requesting that one or more upstream nodes adjust their transmission rates. The logic can also be used to prioritize packets and expedite the handling of priority packets. Other examples of SRP fairness logic are described in the co-pending and commonly owned application entitled “Weighted Fairness Decisions in a SRP Forwarding Block”, to Necdet Uzun et. al, filed May 11, 2001, and assigned serial number (~~unknown~~) 09/854,416, the contents of which are expressly incorporated herein by reference.